

Dear Representative Fleishmann, Senator Slossberg, Senator Boucher and Members of the Education Committee:

I am writing in opposition of HB 5447.

I have been a practitioner in the state of Connecticut for the past 19 years, working for a non-profit agency that services individuals with intense special needs. Many of the children in our programs come to us with such severe maladaptive behaviors, they can barely function, let alone learn in a typical setting. In order to provide any semblance of an appropriate education (as per their rights under IDEA), we must have a high number of well trained and qualified staff along with an environment arranged for safe and effective learning.

We are one of a number of such providers in the state of CT that has taken on the education of children who otherwise are not being educated. If this bill were to pass, there will be less private providers, less viable placement options, and insufficient funding to implement an appropriate IEP. In the long run, the state would likely spend more money when our students reach the age of 21 because they will be less skilled than if they had a quality program.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Judy Palazzo, M.S., BCBA  
Director of Behavioral Services  
Milestones Behavioral Services